

GOP Tax Plan—Education Cuts

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GOP TAX PLAN -

EDUCATION CUTS

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND VICE PRESIDENT GORE: CHALLENGING CONGRESS TO INVEST IN EDUCATION

July 26, 1999

Today, President Clinton called on Congress to invest in education, announced new Administration estimates of the severe long-term impact on education of the Republican tax and budget plans, and threatened to veto any tax bill failing to leave room for adequate investments in education. The President emphasized that the Republican tax and budget plans would cause devastating cuts in key initiatives to help children read well, keep schools safe and drug-free, reduce class size, support after-school programs, and expand access to college. He urged Congress instead to enact a responsible tax plan targeted to help communities modernize schools and help families finance their retirement, child care, and long-term care while saving Social Security and Medicare, and leaving room for vital investments in education and defense.

REPUBLICAN TAX BILL SQUEEZES OUT FUNDING FOR EDUCATION. The President announced new Administration estimates¹ of the long-term impact of the Republican tax and budget plans on key investments needed to improve our public schools and expand access to college. In the tenth year alone of the Republican tax plan, this nation could be forced to:

- **Deny local school districts vital support to build and modernize 5400 public schools across the nation.** The President's targeted tax cut would cover the interest on state and local efforts to build and modernize 6,000 public schools across the nation. The Republican tax cut provides marginal help to address the needs of only one-tenth that many schools. The President's proposal to rebuild our public schools could be fully funded using about 1% of the Republican tax cut approved by the House.
- **Deny 5.9 million children in high-poverty communities extra academic support under the Title I program.** Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act currently provides much-needed academic support to 12 million children in high-poverty communities, and the President has proposed important reforms to make sure they master the basics and reach high standards. The Republican plan goes in the opposite direction and could reduce the number of children served by this program cut to pre-1992 levels.
- **Deny 480,000 children the assistance they need to learn to read.** The Reading Excellence program currently provides funding that will help one million children learn to read independently and well by the end of the 3rd grade. Under the Republican budget and tax plans, 480,000 fewer children could get the help they need to learn to read.
- **Deny smaller classes to more than a million young children in the early grades.** The Republican plans could deprive more than one million students of the opportunity to learn in smaller classes in the early grades. Last year, a bipartisan agreement was reached to make a down payment on the President's plan to hire 100,000 teachers to reduce class size in the early grades to a nationwide average of 18, and earlier this month the U.S. Education Department awarded funds to help local school districts hire 30,000 teachers before school starts this fall. While the President wants to finish the job and hire 100,000 teachers, the Republican tax and budget plans could force cuts from current levels by more than half.
- **Deny early childhood and preschool services to 430,000 kids.** Head Start currently provides funding to provide early childhood and preschool services to 835,000 students, and the Republican plan could deny 430,000 children access to this essential support.
- **Deny 215,000 students the after school and summer school programs they need.** The 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program currently provides funding to help provide after-school and summer

school programs to about 400,000 students in safe and enriching academic environments. While the President wants to triple this number, the Republican budget and tax plans would reduce it by 215,000 students.

- **Slash funding for children with disabilities.** Special Education could be cut by \$3.4 billion by the tenth year of the tax cut, severely limiting the Federal contribution to programs that help children with disabilities. Simply maintaining current funding levels, adjusted for inflation, would lead to \$6.6 billion invested in this program in FY2009.
- **Cut violence and drug prevention programs.** By the tenth year of the Republican tax cut, Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities funding would be reduced by nearly \$334 million. This is less than half of the \$696 million that would be invested in violence and drug-prevention and under current spending patterns. The Republican plans could also eliminate funding for crisis counseling and increased security in schools experiencing violent incidents, such as the recent tragic shootings in Littleton, Colorado and Conyers, Georgia.
- **Make college less affordable for low and middle-income students by slashing Pell Grants.** The maximum Pell Grant -- a grant to help make college more affordable -- could be slashed to \$2175, the lowest level since 1987. This would be a sharp cut from the \$3850 which would otherwise be reached by FY2009 under current spending patterns, and it would deny low and middle income students critical financial aid to make college more affordable.
- **Deny nearly 500,000 students the opportunity to work their way through college.** The Work-Study program currently provides funding to help approximately 930,000 low and middle-income students work their way through college. Nearly 500,000 students could be denied access to this program under Republican tax and budget plans.
- **Deny nearly 500,000 disadvantaged students the extra guidance and support they need to prepare for college.** Under the Republican plan, nearly 500,000 young people would not get the extra support they need to prepare for college through the GEAR-UP and TRIO programs. GEAR-UP is a nationwide initiative providing funds to help 180,000 low-income middle and high school students receive academic and support services to help them prepare for college. TRIO provides counseling and educational support for 725,000 students nationwide.
- **Deny hundreds of thousands of disadvantaged young people the summer jobs and job training they need to succeed.** Under the Republican plan, 329,000 thousand fewer disadvantaged students would get the education, training, and summer jobs they need. Sixty-two out of 118 job corps centers could be forced to close, and more than 26,000 thousand students in high-poverty communities would be denied access to education, training, and employment assistance through the Youth Opportunity Grants.

ⁱ The calculations are based on the Republican budget and tax plans. These calculations assume that Congress -- as envisioned by the tax bill approved by the House last week and the measure being debated in the Senate this week -- allocates nearly \$800 billion to tax cuts over the next ten years, and that it also funds defense at the President's requested level and pays down debt by as much as the Congressional budget resolution promises. Given these assumptions, the budget resolution and current Republican tax plans would require dramatic cuts to domestic discretionary programs -- cutting roughly half from current funding levels.

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